

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1-12 remain in the application. New dependent claims 20-26 have been added. No new subject matter has been added. New dependent claim 26 is identical to canceled claim 3 (canceled without prejudice) and has been added to provide dependency from claim 6 instead of claim 1 for antecedent basis. The dependency of claim 5 has also been changed.

Claims 9-12 have been allowed. The Examiner indicated that claims 6-8 contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 1, 3 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,132,405 (Nilsson). Claims 1, 3, 4 and 5 were rejected as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,270,535 (Bogue). Claim 2 was rejected as obvious over Nilsson in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,098,413 (Trudell) or 5,057,075 (Moncrief). Applicants have amended claim 1 to add the recitation of the removable stiffening member having a guidewire lumen which is recited in allowed claim 6. Other features of claim 6 remain in dependent form. The recitation of the stiffening insert has been canceled from claim 1 and placed in new dependent claim 20 as not believed necessary to distinguish over the prior art. The stiffening member removably positionable within the central lumen of the catheter and having a lumen for receiving a guidewire therethrough is not taught or suggested in the Nilsson or Bogue patents and therefore claim 1 is believed to distinguish over the prior art. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

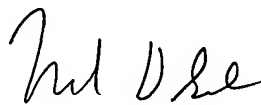
Dependent claims 2, 4, 5 and 20-26 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are therefore believed patentable for at least the same reasons claim 1 is believed patentable.

Prompt and favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned should the Examiner believe it would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____



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